



**STATE OF WASHINGTON**  
**HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD**  
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**Locke, Bergeson to focus on links in state's education systems**

**OLYMPIA** — Gov. Gary Locke will be the keynote speaker Tuesday at an education reform conference focusing on links among pre-school, K-12 and higher education systems.

"Education Reform and the Higher Education Community" is under the sponsorship of the Office of the Governor, the Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Locke's keynote address will focus on closing the achievement gap for students.

"Our education system that has developed over the past century is unable to cope with the new demands of the information economy. No longer can we rely on a system that prepares only a few to complete college. All students must meet higher achievement standards throughout their education experiences. The ultimate goal of a P-16 system is to improve student achievement by getting kids off to a good start, raising academic standards, conducting appropriate assessments, improving teacher quality and smoothing student transitions from one level of learning to the next," Locke said.

"P-16 is the logical next step in standards-based reform. Unless all three systems — preschool, K-12, and higher education — begin to work together, we will never achieve our goal of having all students prepared for meaningful work in the 21st century," he added.

Dr. Terry Bergeson, superintendent of public instruction, will introduce the subject of "P-16" and why it is important to work collaboratively to focus on student success.

"This conference reflects a concerted effort to get everyone who cares about education together on the same page," said Dr. Bergeson. "It is essential for the K-12 system to be connected with – and supported by – higher education. I'm excited about the positive discussions we have begun with leaders in education about the interconnectivity that must exist between each level of learning in our state. This conference is a crucial step toward that shared knowledge."

Marc Gaspard, executive director of the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board, said the event could have profound effects on next steps in education reform.

"Education reform doesn't start and stop at high school but requires our colleges and universities to be invested in our students' achievements," Gaspard said. "While this one-day event may not provide all the answers, it will help us chart the next steps for a K-12/higher education partnership."

The event also will feature national and local experts who will address different aspects of education reform across the nation, as well as local efforts to improve systems of lifelong learning.

The conference is designed to invite an open exchange of information about efforts under way here in Washington and across the nation to prepare students for a successful education from pre-school through college graduation. A goal of the event is to identify specific areas to target as the state works to increase the number of students ready to move into higher education.

**Who:** Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board  
Office of the Governor  
Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

**What:** “Education Reform and the Higher Education Community”  
Conference

**When:** Tuesday, Dec. 4  
9 a.m.

**Where:** Washington State Convention & Trade Center  
800 Convention Place  
Rooms 613 (presentations) and 608 (lunch)  
Seattle

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